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Urban District of Horncastle

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

1956

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HORNCASTLE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health 1956

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL

Medical Officer of Health

S. A. O'HAGAN, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Public Health Inspector

H. SMITH, A.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

The Medical Officer is also Medical Officer for Woodhall Spa Urban District and Horncastle Rural District Councils.

The Sanitary Inspector is also Surveyor, Meat Inspector and Housing, Allotments and Markets Manager.

There is a Public Health Committee which deals with all matters affecting Public Health, other than housing.

Members of Committee:-

R.L. Kisby (Chairman)
Mrs. M. Robison
E. Goodacre
E. Kemp
F. Townley

To the Chairman and Members,
HORNCASTLE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for 1956.

1956 opened abruptly with dysentery as its main feature and the worry of parents in the town. Now as I write, polio is the chief fear although it has not appeared in Horncastle.

Much of the fear in the public mind is unnecessary for today, even in the hard hit areas, a child lives in greater danger of road accidents than ever it did of polio. Reasonable care is all that should be expected - if we demand more we may become a race of neurotics, too preoccupied with precautions against death and suffering to have any time to enjoy being alive.

Administratively, a dramatic advance in slum clearance would be pleasant to record, but experience of compulsorily removing old people is not encouraging. In a few cases, perhaps, it is necessary to resort to compulsion but not many elderly people are able to adapt to new ways in new homes. For this reason it has not seemed good to draw up extensive clearance areas.

I am,
Your obedient Servant,

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICAL SECTION

AREA OF URBAN DISTRICT:	1421 acres
REGISTRAR GENERAL'S ESTIMATE OF MID-YEAR POPULATION:	3880
DENSITY OF POPULATION PER ACRE:	2.73
SUM REPRESENTED BY PENNY RATE:	£71. s9. 4.66d.
RATEABLE VALUE OF URBAN DISTRICT:	£18,921.
NUMBER OF INHABITED HOUSES:	1272
MOVEABLE DWELLINGS LICENCED UNDER PUBLIC HEALTH ACT:	10.

VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTHS

Live Births		
Legitimate	Male	22
	Female	27
	Total	49
Illegitimate	Male	1
	Female	1
	Total	2
Total live births		51
Crude live birth rate per 1000 estimated population		13.4
Comparability factor for Horncastle		1.09
Therefore standardized live birth rate per 1000 estimated population		14.6
Live birth rate, England and Wales per 1000 estimated population		15.7

Still-Births

Legitimate	Male	1
	Female	0
	Total	1

Still-birth rate Horncastle 19.6 per 1000 total births

Total still-birth rate, England and Wales 23.0 per 1000 total births

DEATHS

	1954	1955	1956
Male	22	28	17
Female	30	19	23
	52	47	40

Crude death rate per 1000 estimated population 10.52

Standardized death rate per 1000 estimated population 9.4

Death rate England and Wales per 1000 estimated population 11.7

Age at Death (years)	Number of Deaths 1956	1955	1954	%age of Total Deaths - 1956
Under 1	0	2	0	
1 - 4	0	1	1	
5 - 9	0	0	0	
10 - 14	0	0	0	
15 - 24	0	2	0	
25 - 34	1	1	0	2.5
35 - 44	2	0	2	5.0
45 - 54	2	0	4	5.0
55 - 64	3	7	3	7.5
65 - 74	11	9	18	26.5
75 & over	21	25	24	53.5

Causes of Death as shown in the Registrar General's Short List

Short List No.	Cause of Death	Male	Female	Total
1.	Tuberculosis, Respiratory	1	0	1
2.	Tuberculosis, other	0	0	0
3.	Syphilitic Disease	0	1	1
4.	Diphtheria	0	0	0
5.	Whooping Cough	0	0	0
6.	Meningococcal Infection	0	0	0
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	0	0	0
8.	Measles	0	0	0
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases	0	0	0
10.	Malignant Neoplasm, stomach	0	0	0
11.	Malignant Neoplasm, lung, bronchus	0	0	0
12.	Malignant Neoplasm, breast	0	1	1
13.	Malignant Neoplasm, uterus	0	0	0
14.	Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms	1	1	2
15.	Leukaemia, aleukaemia	0	0	0
16.	Diabetes	1	0	1
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system	1	4	5
18.	Coronary Disease, Angina	4	3	7
19.	Hypertension with heart disease	1	0	1
20.	Other heart disease	3	5	8
21.	Other circulatory disease	0	1	1
22.	Influenza	0	0	0
23.	Pneumonia	0	2	2
24.	Bronchitis	0	0	0
25.	Other diseases of respiratory system	0	0	0
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	0	1	1
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	0	0	0
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	0	0	0
29.	Hyperplasia of prostrate	2	0	2
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	0	0	0
31.	Congenital malformations	0	0	0
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	1	4	5
33.	Motor vehicle accidents	1	0	1
34.	All other accidents	0	0	0
35.	Suicide	1	0	1
36.	Homicide and operations of war	0	0	0
	Totals	17	23	40

Causes of Death at ages below 65 years

Cardio-Vascular disease	5
Motor accident	1
Lymphosarcoma	1

Maternal Mortality

Nil

Death rate of infants under 1 year of age

Total death rate of infants 1956	Nil
Death rate per 1000 live births	Nil
National infant mortality rate	23.8 per 1000 related live births

Infectious Diseases

Whooping Cough	17
Dysentery (sonne)	47
" (Salmonella Bredency)	2
" (Salmonella Typhimurium)	1
Pneumonia	1
Scarlet fever & Scarletina	2
Erysipelas	3
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	1 + 1 not notified before death

No deaths resulted in any of the other cases.
There were no notifications of measles.

Dysentery: Very early in 1956 Sonne dysentery was imported almost simultaneously from Coningsby and Scunthorpe and an explosive epedemic centred on the Manor House Road Infants School developed. There could be little doubt that rapid spread was occurring in the school and because of its poor sanitary facilities, it was temporarily closed, pending the establishment of a sanitary routine designed to minimise spread by fingers.

Fortunately the disease responded promptly to treatment with succinyl sulphathiazole and there were far fewer chronic carriers than at Coningsby where no specific treatment was found to benefit sufferers.

I believe that the actual number of cases was far higher than the 47 notified, since one heard subsequently of cases of diarrhoea which were consealed to avoid risk of prolonged exclusion from school or work. This was, of course, grossly unsatisfactory, but it was not quickly recognised that prompt and careful treatment did much to minimise suffering and, as in the Lindsey County Council's childrens homes, practically eliminated the cross infection that was rife elsewhere.

Whooping Cough: Following an entire year of freedom, pertusis was notified in 17 cases during 1956. There seems reason to believe that immunization is helping to a substantial degree to limit the epidemics of earlier years, so that the disease does not now reach such peaks as a few years ago, although the same cycle of incidence is observed.

Poliomyelitis: The public demand for protection against this disease far exceeds the supply of material and although there is a prospect of improved supplies and the County Council intend to augment its Medical staff for the purpose, at present only those children whose parents returned a request form in 1956 are being immunized.

No ill effects of any kind have been reported and although Australian reports are extremely favourable, it is too early to say how much protection will be given by vaccination in this area. At least 5 - 1 improvement may be hoped for.

Food-Poisoning: Two outbreaks occurred, one envolving one case of Salmonella Typhi-Murium infection of undiscovered origin, and the other a potential dangerous outbreak in a family food business, of Salmonella Bredency. In the latter the extremely good co-operation with the Medical Officer of Health resulted in the clearing of the infection without risk to other persons and without necessitating closing the business.

Tuberculosis: That the disease is not yet beaten is shown by a death of a case not notified during life and the notification of a new case during 1956.

It is anticipated that the County Council will make available to 13 year old children tuberculin-testing and where advisable protection during their most susceptible years by B.C.G. vaccination.

The Chest Clinic staff at Lincoln gave vaccination to all the children in Welton and Langworth schools whose parents desired it and who were shown by a preliminary test to be susceptible. Experience showed a very high popular demand and increasingly the public is becoming aware of King Edward VII's famous remark "if preventable-why not prevented?"

It must be remembered that adolescents in Horncastle will not stay only in Horncastle but will meet the risk of Infection wherever they mix with crowds so that they will need all the support we can give them in this field as elsewhere.

Preventive Measures

There is a marked preference now for the use of combined protection against Diphtheria and Whooping Cough, as shown by the following figures supplied by the County Medical Officer of Health:-

All children under 5 years of age:

	1954	1955	1956
Diphtheria protection only	34	8	2
Whooping Cough protection only	14	4	2
Combined Diphtheria and Whooping Cough	2	28	43
Smallpox Vaccination	17	31	36
Revaccination			7

FOOD

Meat Inspection: The work of meat inspection was carried out efficiently throughout the year. Mr P. Walsh relieving Mr. Smith for the holidays on an exchange basis. There were no alarming discoveries this year but review of the percentage of animals slaughtered who were found to be suffering from Tuberculosis shows a good downward trend:

	1954	1955	1956
Beasts	14.8	11.8	9.4
Cows	22.9	12.1	16.0
Calves	0	1.8	0
Pigs	10.8	8.7	5.3

That the figure is substantially reliable may be accepted from the lack of any similar fall in condemnations for other conditions.

The Local Authority continued to maintain, under requisition, the only licenced slaughterhouse, and this was used rather less during 1956 than in the two preceeding years, and there is a feeling amongst the butchers that individual private slaughterhouses would be preferred. The existing one is far from ideal but it is unreasonable to make expensive modifications until the Government, at very long last, publish their new regulations for the structure etc, of slaughterhouses. Meanwhile, one butcher is building at his own risk, a private slaughterhouse, which shows some measure of the depth of feeling in the matter.

Other foods: This year shows a sharp drop in voluntarily surrendered foods. It has not been necessary to formally act in any case.

The number of retailers stocking deep-frozen foods is increasing and it is not too much to hope that the Council's refuse disposal service will be eased of large quantities of jars and tins.

Fish: There has been a definite improvement in availability and variety during the year, both in wet fish and pre-packed frozen fish. Competition has been stimulated by two new traders in wet fish as well as by the increased availability of quick-frozen fish in wide variety.

Ice Cream: It is with satisfaction that I can report the elimination of small-scale, back-room ice cream manufacture.

Sampling was not undertaken due to unreliability of delivery of samples to the laboratory and the change of Inspectorship at the most crucial period.

Meat Products: The statistical report of the Public Health Inspector requires some explanation: Initially it was thought that a high proportion of premises would require structural alteration or plumbing work and an initial inspection by the Medical Officer and the Public Health Inspector confirmed this opinion. The available labour, locally, was quite unable to deal with a spate of new works and premises have been revisited to assist where necessary in temporary measures until permanent installations could be made.

It would be fair to summarize that, in an old congested town many food premises are conversions from dwelling houses and should properly be re-build on sites with adequate services. Since this is, in most cases, quite impossible, an attempt is being made to reach a standard in which no gross contraventions of the principles of hygiene remain.

The Chamber of Trade has been helpful by offering facilities to me to address members of the Food Trades and summaries of the current requirements were prepared and distributed to traders.

Water Supply

Water supply remained adequate and of Class I quality throughout the year. At the year's end, negotiations were being started with neighbouring authorities for the formation of a water board large enough to warrent a full time qualified staff. Under present conditions, little benefit would accrue to Horncastle since the simple gravity fed system meets all ordinary needs without any pumping costs whilst the source has been much improved since the war and quality is uniformly excellent. Nevertheless, integration has advantages.

Sewage Disposal

Minor works of adaption and re-utilization of sections of the Tank Lane works have slightly increased the carrying capacity of the works and beds.

Refuse disposal

Possibly due to better supervision and the dull summer, there have been fewer complaints of crickets on the tipping site.

Improvement of collecting methods is difficult for many streets are narrow and back premises difficult of access so that the most hygienic practice - that of collecting the bin and emptying it direct into the vehicle - involves more manual effort than the 'one journey' method in which the bin is emptied, in the yard, into a light alloy skip, which is then in turn carried to the vehicle and emptied.

Food and Drugs Act, 1955.

There has been a good response to the demand for improved hygiene in the food trades. The use of compulsion has always been abhorrent to this nation and there have not yet been any contraventions warrenting actions beyond on the spot advice. Some traders have gone to considerable lengths to bring their premises into compliance and at the same time have improved the appearance of the shops so that it appears likely that the money invested will bring adequate returns.

As mentioned in last years report, the necessary hot and cold water washing facilities were made available to market stall holders by the Council, although the majority of the stall holders are not required to have hot water available, it is undoubtedly of value and a higher standard of handling has been observed.

Housing:

Little progress was made in Slum Clearance during the year and no scheme of building for other than slum clearance is envisaged by the Council.

A site for future development has been considered, situated on the south-west side of Boston Road, but the necessary work of selecting the houses to be demolished has not yet been done.

REPORT OF WORK DONE BY PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR DURING THE YEAR

HOUSING

Total number of new houses erected during year:-

(1) By local authority	0
(2) By other local authorities	0
(3) By other bodies or persons	3

Housing Repairs and Rents Bill:-

Number of Certificates of Disrepair issued following applications by tenants served with rent increase notices (Sec. 26)	0

Inspection of Dwellinghouses during the year:-

(a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	58
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	70

Remedy of defects during the year with service of formal notice:-

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by local authority or their officers	39

ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR:-

(a) Proceedings under Sec. 9 & 10 of the Housing Act, 1936:-

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	0

(2) Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices

(a) by owners 0 (b) by local authority 0

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:-

(1) Number of dwelling houses in repect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	0

(2) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices

(a) by owners 0 (b) by local authority 0

(c) Proceedings under Secs. 11 & 13 of the Housing Act 1936:-

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which demolition orders were made	0
(2) Number of dwelling houses demolished in persuance of demolition orders	0
(3) Number of dwelling houses subject to undertakings or Closing Orders	2

(d) Proceedings under Sec. 12 of the Housing Act 1936:-

(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing orders were made	0
(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing orders were determined the tenement or rooms having been rendered fit	0

(e) Proceedings under Sec. 26 & 26:-

(1) Number of clearance orders made	0
(2) Number of dwelling houses demolished in persuance thereof	0

HOUSING ACT 1936 - PART IV - OVERCROWDING

(a) (1) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	3
(2) Number of persons concerned in such cases	14
(b) (1) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	N/K
(2) Number of families dwelling therin	N/K
(3) Number of persons dwelling therein	N/K

HOUSING ACT 1949

(a) Number of applications for grants received	0
(b) Number of grants made	0
(c) Number of applications for grants made by Local Authority	0

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS, TENTS, VANS, etc:-

Number of site licences	0
Number of individual licences	7
Total number of caravans permitted under licences	7
Number inspections during the year - Sites	0
- Dwellings	10
Number of contraventions remedied	1

FOOD PREMISES

Bakehouses

Number in district	6
Number of inspections	12
Number of contraventions	3
Defects remedied	1

Milk Supplies

Number of distributors on register:-	
Sterilized	4
Pasteurized	3
T.T.	3
Non-designated	3
Number of samples of milk taken in course of delivery	0
Number of inspections of dairy premises	6
Contraventions remedied	0

Ice Cream

Number of manufacturers on register	-
Number of premises registered for sale of ice cream	18
Number of inspections of premises made	18
Number of contraventions found	2
Defects remedied	1
Number of samples taken	0

Meat Products

Number of premises registered for manufacture of meat products	6
Number of inspections made	12
Number of contraventions found	4
Defects remedied	0(delayed by plumbing)

Other food premises

Number of inspections	42
Number of contraventions found	7
Defects remedied	3

Slaughterhouses

Number licenced - Abattoir type	0
Private (individual)	0
Number operated by Local Authority	1

FOODS CONDEMNED (other than carcases)

Food	1954	1955	1956
Bacon	19 lbs		
Imported Meat	-	155 lbs	-
Tinned Meat and Fish	35 lbs	29 lbs	9½ lbs
Tinned Fruit	65 lbs	24 lbs	25 lbs
Tinned Vegetables	17 lbs	22 lbs	12 lbs
Miscellaneous Tins	-	11 lbs	-
Dry Goods	32 lbs	34 lbs	-
Totals	168 lbs	325 lbs	46½ lbs

Method of disposal:- Buried at Refuse Tip.

UNSOUND FOOD

CARCASES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED

	Cattle Excluding Cows			Cows			Calves			Sheep and Lambs			Pigs		
	1954	1955	1956	1954	1955	1956	1954	1955	1956	1954	1955	1956	1954	1955	1956
Number killed (if known)	560	332	390	70	33	12	107	56	76	2674	622	785	1538	953	807
Number inspected	560	332	390	70	33	12	107	56	76	2674	622	785	1538	953	807
All diseases except tuberculosis Whole carcases condemned	4	6	0	1	0	0	3	2	0	38	1	2	24	4	1
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	109	48	71	18	9	3	2	1	4	71	19	24	33	24	29
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis	20.1	16.3	18.2	27.1	27.3	25	4.7	5.4	4.2	4.0	3.2	3.8	3.6	2.9	3.5
Tuberculosis only Whole carcases condemned	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	8	1	1
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	82	39	37	15	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	159	82	43
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	14.8	11.8	9.4	22.9	12.1	16.6	0	1.8	0	0	0	0	10.8	8.7	5.3

Method of disposal:- Coloured, and collected by Messrs Wings, Boston.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

Closets

Number of houses with privy vaults in district	0
Number of houses with pail closets in district	45
Number of houses with water closets in district	1224
Number of W.C's substituted for pail closets or privy vaults	0

Cesspools and Septic Tanks

Number of cesspools and septic tanks emptied, cleansed etc	0
Number of cesspools and septic tanks abolished	0

WATER SUPPLIES

Domestic

Number of houses supplied from Public mains:-		
	in house	960
	Standpipe	287
Number of houses supplied from private sources:-		
	in house	0
	not in house	23
New sources of supply	public	0
	private	0
New sources of supply		0
Number of public sources closed as polluted		0
Any part requiring a public supply or the replacement of a public supply for health reasons		0
Number of samples taken for chemical examination		0
Number of samples taken for bacteriological examination Class I		49
	other Classes	0

Swimming Pools

Number of public swimming pools in operation	1
Number fitted with continuous mechanical filtration and chlorination	Chlorination only
Number of samples of swimming pool water taken for bacteriological examination : Satisfactory	1

GENERAL

Offensive Trades

Number of premises in district	1
Number of inspections	6
Contraventions remedied	2

Knackers Yards

Number licenced	1
Number of inspections	6
Contraventions remedied	1

Shops Act, 1950.

Number of shops inspected	18
Contraventions remedied	0

Disinfection etc.

Rooms disinfected: (a) ordinary infectious diseases	2
(b) tuberculosis	-
Number of premises disinfested	1

Refuse collection and disposal

Number of premises from which refuse is collected	1534
Frequency of collection	weekly
Method of disposal	Part controlled tipping: Part tipping in water. Tipping in water is unsatisfactory
Is collection by Local Authority or Contract?	L.A.

Nuisances

Total number of nuisances during the year	17
(1) abated as result of informal action by Public Health Inspector	15
(2) reported to Council - Statutory notice issued	1
" " not issued	1

Details of nuisances abated

	After informal Intimation	After Statutory Notice
Refuse	6	-
Foul ditches, ponds and stagnant water	2	-
Drainage	2	-
Poultry and animals	4	-
Dangerous premises	2	-
Miscellaneous nuisances	2	1

Rats & Mice Destruction

Number of Rodent operatives employed	2 (Part-time)
Number of premises treated:	
(a) dwelling houses	27
(b) other premises	10
Are there any serious reservoirs of rats in the district?	No

Atmospheric Pollution

Number of visits	8
Number of nuisances found	1
Number of nuisances abated	1

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 & 1948

1. Inspection for purposes of provision as to health (including Inspections made by Public Health Inspector)

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) factories in which Secs. 1-4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Auth.	6	5	-	-
(ii) factories not included in (i) in which Secs. 7 is enforced by Local Auth.	41	55	-	-
(iii) other premises in which Secs. 7 is enforced by Local Auth.	1	39	-	-
TOTAL	48	99	-	-

2. Cases in which defects were found

Particulars	No of cases in which defects were found				No of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector	Referred By H.M. Inspector	
Want of Cleanliness	2	2	-	-	-
Overcrowding	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable Temperature	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate Ventilation	-	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors	2	2	-	-	-
Sanitary Conv's (a) inefficient	1	1	-	-	-
(b) unsuitable or defective	-	-	-	2	-
(c) not separate for sexes	-	-	-	1	-
Other offences against the Act	-	-	-	-	-
Total	5	5	-	3	-

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